

DOSSIER ON EAST TIMOR
for
THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

1. Prison Visitation.
2. Missing persons.
3. Execution without trial.
4. Appeal to ICRC from Timorese wishing to leave East Timor.
5. Questions re current ICRC operation in East Timor .

Prepared by:

Action for World Development,
183 Gertrude St.,
FITZROY, VIC. 3065
AUSTRALIA.

September, 1979.

I. PRISON VISITATION

It has been noted with considerable concern that ICRC will not be carrying out one of its traditional works, namely prison visitation, during its current operation in East Timor.

The Indonesian military administration in East Timor has a considerable number of prisons (approx. 40) in East Timor where, it is believed, many Timorese are detained as prisoners of war or political prisoners.

There are four (4) prisons in Dili:

- i. The Military Police Prison (Penjara Polisi Militer) in Vila Verde.
- ii. The Intelligence Prison (Penjara Assisten Satu Intelijen) in Farol.
- iii. The Army Prison (Penjara Resimen Para-Komando Angkatan Darat: RPKAD) in Colmera.
- iv. The Military Police Prison of Comarca in Balide: the main gaol.

In addition there are three (3) prisons in each of the 12 administrative centres (Kabupaten) outside Dili:

- i. Military Police Prison.
- ii. Army Prison (Penjara Komando Distrik Militer: KODIM).
- iii. R.T.P. Prison (logistics).

Little is known about the numbers of detainees in these prisons or their condition. There have been, however, enough disturbing reports over the years 1976-1979 (referring to, inter alia, torture and brainwashing) to justify a concern that the Geneva Conventions are not being observed.

II. MISSING PERSONS

Reports and letters from East Timor make frequent reference to the 'disappearance' of people. Timorese outside East Timor assume that 'disappearance' means death.

"Many people have already disappeared... Now many widows of the recently disappeared walk around in a very disturbed state, as thin as skeletons." (July 14, 79).

This is not a recent development. People who surrendered under the Presidential Amnesty which expired on Dec. 31 1977, have also disappeared.

The general picture appears to be that FRETELIN leadership people and their relatives (to the third generation, according to one report), able-bodied literate males coming down from the mountains to surrender, and individuals from the elite, are being purged (though there are exceptions to this general pattern).

In at least some cases people have disappeared after surrendering and being 'set free'.

The following are a few names which fall into this general category:

Joao Andrade
 Agostinho Tilman
 Joao Bosco Quintao
 Meno Alves
 Manecas Exposto
 Juvenal Inacio
 Sebastiao Montalvao
 Cornelio Esposto

Sargento Sarmento
 Leopoldo Heraldo Joaquim
 Joao Bosco Soares
 Eduardo Dos Anjos
 Jose Alexandre Gusmao
 Carlos Cesar Correia
 Anibal de Araujo
 Alarico Fernandes

III. EXECUTION WITHOUT TRIAL

About July 1979, the Indonesian Armed Forces executed a Timorese family at Fahi-Nehan (between Same and Alas) in East Timor.

The family involved (mother, father, and five teenage children) were executed without trial, apparently a month or two after surrendering. Their 'crime' was that they were related by marriage to the FRETILIN leader Rogerio Lobato. One of the children was in fact his wife.

Prior to their death the family had spent some years in the mountains fleeing from Indonesian army activity. They were not fighting. During that time two of the children died of hunger and disease. One, Avelino, was 9 years old; the other, Maria Jose, was 6.

The father was a trained nurse. The mother was a former member of the Portuguese Red Cross.

Those executed were:

Alexandrina Amelia Augusta Pires Leite (47, mother).
 Felisberto Gouveia Leite (45, father).

Children *enfants*:

Maria Auxiliadora Filomena Pires Leite (17, Lobato's wife). *epouse de Lobato*
 Dulce Maria Pires Leite (15)
 Rui Manuel Baptista Pires Leite
 and Maria de Fatima Baptista Pires Leite (twins, 12) *jumeaux*

and it

Aurea Fontes Gusmao (16, foster-child). *enfant-adopté*

IV. APPEAL TO ICRC FROM TIMORESE WISHING TO LEAVE EAST TIMOR

Since April 1979 many letters received in Australia from East Timor have carried the following items:

- i. many Timorese (in particular civil servants) gave their names to ICRC personnel who visited East Timor in April 79, in the hope that ICRC could help them get out of East Timor.
- ii. many Timorese (in particular civil servants) have refused to give up

their Portuguese nationality and accept Indonesian citizenship.

- iii. those who gave their names to ICRC in April and/or have refused to take out Indonesian citizenship are 'being treated like foreigners in our own country', to quote an oft-used Timorese expression.

This treatment has involved, for example:

1. the loss of jobs and unemployment.
2. imprisonment.
3. payment of a residential tax.
4. refusal of permission to travel.
5. fear that a purge of those who continue to resist or ask to leave the country will be conducted.

In mid August, the following message came from a civil servant in Dili asking that ICRC be informed of the situation:

"Try to contact ICRC to help us get out of East Timor because we are in a lot of trouble. With the consent of the ICRC we enrolled ourselves publicly but until now we have not heard anything definite about getting out. All the public servants who put their names down have now lost all their rights. From the 12th (of July?) till now we have just been going to the office to sign our names. From the 1st (of August) we will lose our jobs completely. Its 90% certain we will be killed. Therefore we beg you out of charity to do what you can for us."

(This letter was written in Portuguese. It was posted outside Timor to avoid censorship by the Indonesian military intelligence).

Other letters confirm this one.

"I am going to ask for more help because from August 1, all the public servants with Portuguese nationality will be sacked... X and other public servants like him are not accepted in certain jobs... Everybody is terribly afraid. X and X also gave their names to ICRC to get out. X as well. The Indonesians do not look on us kindly. For a small thing you can be put in prison, if you don't disappear altogether. Many people have already disappeared. Noone is secure at home, for fear of being summoned at night... There is a lot of talk about a cleaning up operation, which has already started. The Church and other people have made a petition through the Papal Nunciature to the authorities to stop this from happening." (July 14, 1979).

Loss of jobs is, of course, bad news in itself. Reports are that the cost of living is very high in Dili and those with work carry the responsibility of supporting crowded households in Dili as well as relatives in even worse situations in other places outside the capital. Many in fact look to relatives overseas to support them.

The particular case of the civil servants is but one aspect of a broader problem; viz. that large numbers of East Timorese wish to leave Timor.

This is for one, or a combination, of the following reasons:

- i. Family reunion. (600 are eligible to come to Australia on this basis, approved in principle by both the Australian and the Indonesian governments, but to date less than half have arrived here. Ethnic Timorese, even though eligible, have not been allowed leave Timor for reunion with families abroad. Chinese Timorese with money have been more successful).
- ii. To escape the difficulties associated with life in Timor today.
- iii. Refusal to live under Indonesian control. This would seem to be by far the most compelling reason. Indonesia has few friends amongst the Timorese, inside or outside Timor.

The Lisbon paper Do Templario reported in July 1979 that it knew of 21.000 Timorese who wish to leave East Timor.

V. QUESTIONS RE CURRENT ICRC OPERATION IN EAST TIMOR

1. What are the names of the places receiving aid from ICRC? Where are they? And how many people are in each of them?
 2. Who selected these places and on what basis?
 3. Why has Ermera been excluded from the programme when, it is believed, large numbers of displaced persons are concentrated there in very bad circumstances, e.g. it was reported that early this year some 300 people were dying a month there.
 4. Why are the people in the places ICRC is visiting? Are they allowed cultivate their own food? Are they free to move back to their own villages and recommence farming?
A recent letter from Timor said: "The population is still not authorised to do any farming, but are all accumulated in the villages. Robbery and begging are rife there."
 5. What possibility is there (1) of ICRC extending the length of its stay in East Timor; (2) of broadening the scope of its operation to include matters such as prison visitation and the tracing of missing persons; and (3) of increasing the number of its personnel.
 6. What is ICRC's assessment of the general humanitarian situation in East Timor? Is there a need for other aid operations to be conducted simultaneously with the current ICRC work? If so, what form should this (these) take? What does ICRC recommend as the next step once the current operation is completed?
-

20.9.79

Sender: Action for World Development
183 Gertrude St.
FITZROY VIC. 3065
AUSTRALIA